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Loki: God of Mischief

Tori Blas

Chapman University, blas@chapman.edu

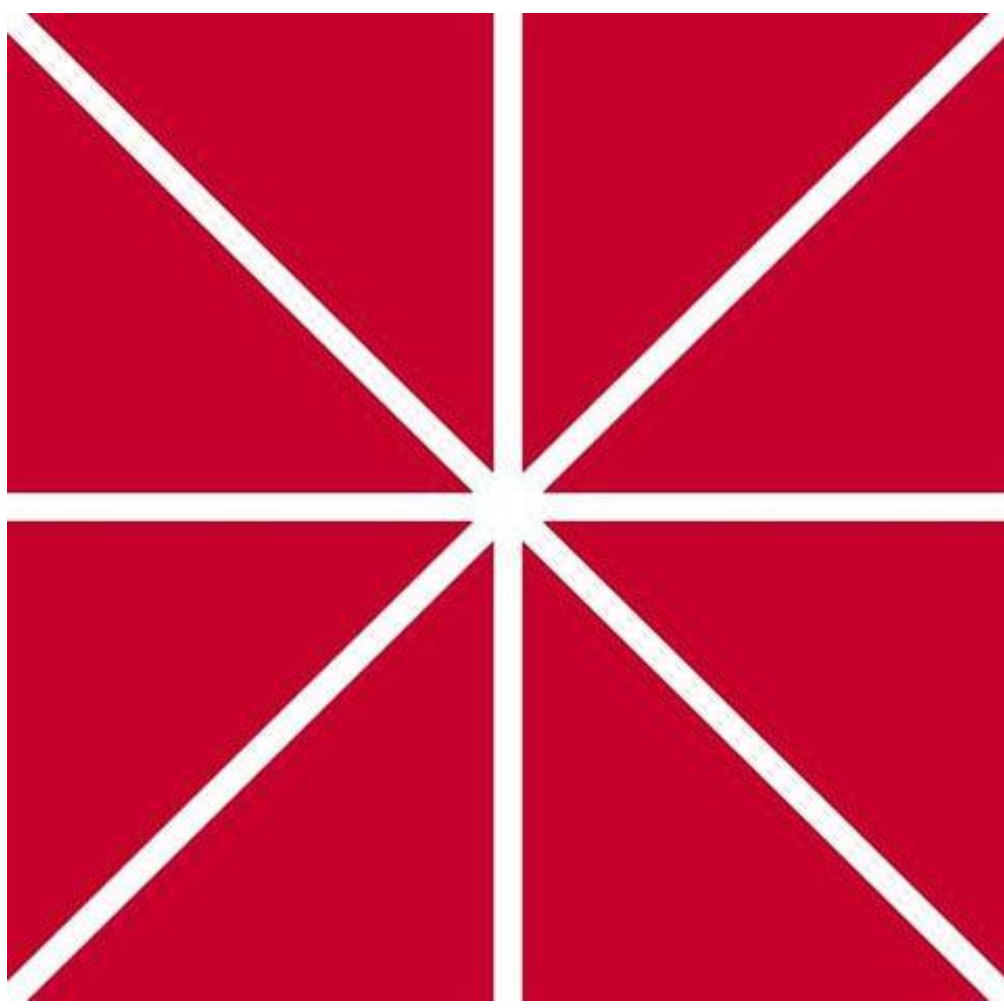
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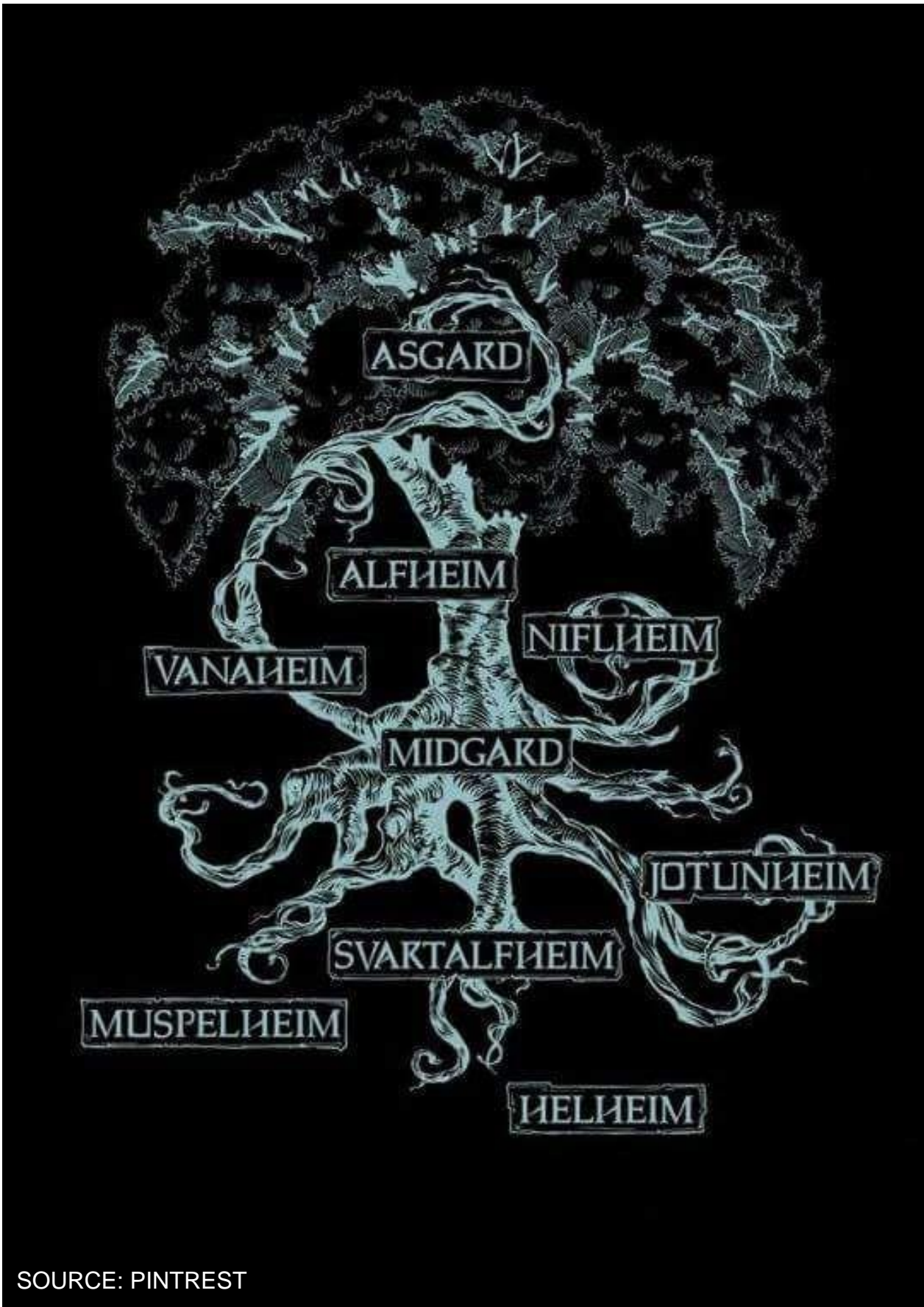
Loki: God of Mischief

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"I, Loki, Prince of Asgard, Odinson, the rightful King of Jotunheim, God of Mischief, do hereby pledge to you, my undying fidelity."
- Loki in *Avengers: Infinity War* (2018)

Key Characteristics

- Giant of Joutenheim but lives in Asgard
- God of mischief
- Shapeshifter
- Unlike *Marvel*, not the son of Odin or brother of Thor
- Blood brother of Odin
- Betrays and tricks the gods for amusement or gain
- Also helps the gods when there is personal gain



The Nine Realms

Asgard: Where Odin and the Aesir (gods) reside
Alfheim: Home to the light elves
Vanaheim: The Vanir live here in peace with a treaty with the Aesir. Some Vanir may live in Asgard
Niflheim: World of dark mist
Midgard: Home to humans
Jotunheim: Land of the giants
Svartalfheim: Also known as Nidavellir, home to the dwarves.
Thor's hammer, Mjolnir, was made here
Muspelheim: World of fire where Surtur, the beginning of the universe, lives
Helheim: Named after its ruler, Hel, where the dead who didn't die bravely go



Loki Worshipped

Despite being considered the god of mischief, Loki isn't one of the Aesir and wasn't worshipped like them either. The traits of trickery and betrayal aren't worshipped in any culture, but we have Loki who stands for them. So why is he in the mythology? Well, Loki may also represent free will in humans. While gods can stand for the traits humans strive to have, Loki pushes back against it, acting as he wants. If anything, he embodies what humans could be, Not the best of what humans can be, but what we're capable of if we chose to work for our own.



Marvel's Loki Laufeyson

Loki's first appearance as a *Marvel* character came in 1962 in *Journey Into Mystery* #85. He was introduced as Odin's adoptive son and Thor's brother. Spiteful, mischievous, and power hungry, Loki became one of the villains of the comics. His role has grown from the comics and into the Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU). Portrayed by actor Tom Hiddleston, Loki was introduced in *Thor* (2011). He then went on to become the villain in the first *Avengers* movie in the following year and has made appearances in *Marvel* movies that followed. From mythology to comics to movies, Loki has received many alterations. For the sake of simplicity, we'll look between the original mythology and movies.

Thor and Loki

Loki in the MCU is complex like his original counterpart. While they both prove to be able to work with Thor and the heroes of the respective stories, they also don't forget to remind us that they have their own agenda beneath it all. Both have betrayed Thor, but what changes is if he is forgiven. To display the bonds of brothers, Thor in the MCU is more forgiving and accepting of Loki compared to the original mythology. In their origins, Thor and Loki do venture together at times, but Thor is more wary of the trickster and forceful if something does go wrong because of him. The difference may also sprout from the difference in the portrayal of Thor who is much more light-hearted on screen.



Magic

In *Marvel's* portrayal of Loki, he possesses the abilities of illusion, shapeshifting, and various types of magic along with other superhuman abilities. Loki is indeed known in the original mythology as a shapeshifter. That was key to who he was and often used this to his advantage. However, "magic" wasn't part of his repertoire. While the Aesir did have their own unique abilities, the magic we think of like illusions and defensive/offensive abilities weren't prevalent.

The Death of Balder

When the death of the god Balder is prophesied, his mother, Frigg, gets a promise from every being except mistletoe that they wouldn't hurt him. Learning this, Loki fashions a mistletoe spear. Loki convinces the blind god Hod to throw the spear which inevitably kills Balder. The gods try to reason with Hel to return Balder to them. She says that if all beings mourn his death, she would return Balder. So they go around to ask every living creature. Each one says yes except one. An old woman, most likely Loki disguised, in a cave says she would not mourn his death. Because of this, Balder stays in Hel.



Loki celebrated before realizing that he maybe had done too much this time and went into hiding. He hid as a salmon in a river, but it wasn't enough. The Aesir went after him and caught him, taking him to a cave where his proper wife and two children were told to come to. The gods turned one of his sons into a rabid wolf to maul the other to death. Using the entrails of his mauled son, the gods bound Loki to rocks and dangled a venomous snake above his face to forever drip its venom over him. His wife was ordered to bring her largest bowl with her by the gods and using that bowl she kept the venom from dripping on him until she had the empty the bowl. This cycle will continue until Loki breaks free from his chains. And when he does, it will be the beginning of Ragnarok



Ragnarok

Ragnarok is the end of world. The giants will meet the Aesir at Vigrid, a huge plain for battle while Surt sets all of the world on fire. Loki will have escaped his bindings and bring with him legions of the dishonored dead with him into battle on the side of the giants. Odin will bring the honored dead of Valhalla with him to fight with the gods. In the battle, Odin will fight Fenris Wolf and lose by being devoured. Loki's other son, Jormungandr, will die at the hand of Thor who will, in turn, die of the serpent's venom. A new world will rise from what is left of the old one. Two humans who survived the destruction will repopulate the world. The surviving gods along with Balder and Hod who will have left Hel will assume the roles of the past gods. The world will begin again, and Ragnarok will come again as a never ending cycle.